

STATE SENATOR • MARK SCHAUER • 19TH DISTRICT

Schauer Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 15, 2005

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Schauer: “Sojourner Truth’s Day Has Come”

November 26 Officially Named Sojourner Truth Day

LANSING--State Senator Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) praised the action of the Michigan House today for joining the Senate in passing a bill that includes the designation of November 26 as “Sojourner Truth Day.”

“Sojourner Truth is one of our most influential historical figures. I am pleased that we are officially recognizing her life and work,” said Sen. Schauer. “Her contribution to the fight for equal rights was exceptional, and we are thankful for her example. It is a proud day for Battle Creek and for Michigan.”

Moving this legislation through the Senate required a vigilant effort on the part of Schauer. Schauer re-introduced SB 336 on March 23, 2005, to establish Sojourner Truth Day, but Republican leadership would not bring the bill to a vote. However, Sen. Schauer convinced Sen. Martha Scott (D-Detroit), the sponsor of SB 384, members of the Senate Local Urban and State Affairs Committee, and Senate leadership to include the language of SB 336 in SB 384, a bill establishing the third Saturday in June as “Juneteenth National Freedom Day.”

Dr. Velma Laws-Clay, chair of the Battle Creek Sojourner Truth Institute, praised Schauer on his work to establish Sojourner Truth Day as a state-wide holiday: “The Sojourner Truth Institute and the Battle Creek community are delighted that there will be an official holiday recognizing Sojourner Truth and her legacy. We are fortunate to have someone like Mark Schauer--who understands both what this means to the community and why her work remains relevant today--representing us.”

Sojourner Truth was born to slave parents in New York at the end of the eighteenth century. She is most remembered as an abolitionist and women’s suffragist. She traveled the nation as a preacher and activist for social and racial equality, fighting passionately for the rights of women and slaves. In 1857, she settled in Battle Creek where she became involved in the Freedman’s Relief Agency, initiating job placement efforts that matched newly-freed Blacks with employers in the area. Sojourner Truth died at her home in Battle Creek on November 26, 1883.

Senate Bill 384 now heads to Gov. Granholm who is expected to quickly sign the bill.

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Mark Schauer is the Senate Democratic Floor Leader. He represents the 19th Senate District, which includes all of Calhoun County and most of Jackson County.